

Message Text

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11
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 271226Z JUN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4844
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR EG LY
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS ATTACKS ON QADHAAFI

REF: CAIRO 6293; CAIRO 5845

1. FOR PAST TEN DAYS EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS HAVE HAD
"OPEN SEASON" ON QADHAAFI. PRESS ATTACKS HAVE BEEN
VIRULENT AND BITTER. APART FROM DECRYING LIBYAN-
SOVIET ARMS DEAL, PRESS SHAFTS HAVE BEEN AIMED
AT DISCREDITING QADHAAFI AND OTHER MEMBERS OF RCC,
ESPECIALLY JALLUD. MUCH OLD DIRT HAS BEEN RAKED UP
AND MADE INTO NEW BRICK BATS. THRUST OF EGYTPAN
PRESS COMMENTARY IS THAT QADHAAFI IS AN UPSTART
WHO WILL SHORTLY FACE HIS END.

2. THUS, GAMIL AREF, WRITER IN AKHER SAA', STATES
QADHAAFI SUFFERS FROM SCHIZOPHERIA AND TREATMENT
IS HOPELESS. RECALLING EARLIER PRESS CRITICISM
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BY LIBYAN EDITOR AL-WARITY OF QADHAAFI'S INITIAL

APPOINTMENT OF US OIL COMPANY EMPLOYEE MAGHABI AS FIRST PRIMIN, AREF NOTES AL-WARITH WAS SHORTLY AFTERWARD KILLED IN CAR ACCIDENT AND HINTS DARKLY THAT ACCIDENT WAS PLANNED. QADHAAFI'S PERFORMANCE WHEN APPEARING BEFORE FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS IN EGYPT TWO YEARS AGO IS ALSO RECALLED AND RIDICULED. MUSAWAR'S CHIEF EDITOR, SALAH JAWDAT, CHARGES RCC MEMBERS FEAR QADHAAFI BECAUSE THEY KNOW TRUTH ABOUT CAR ACCIDENT IN WHICH FORMER RCC MEMBER COL AL-MAGRIF WAS KILLED AFTER LATTER HAD CRITICIZED QADHAAFI. ALTHOUGH RCC MEMBERS KEEP QUIET OUT OF FEAR, LIBYAN PEOPLE DO NOT, AS EVIDENCED BY 52 PLOTS ALREADY HATCHED AGAINST QADHAAFI. A 53RD, SAYS JAWDAT, IS BOUND TO BE MADE.

3. ALSO WRITING IN MUSAWAR, SABRI ABU AL-MAGD CLAIMS QADHAAFI WAS ASSIGNED (PRESUMABLY BY SOVIETS) THE SPECIAL MISSION OF WEAKENING EGYPT. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH QADHAAFI'S OWN DESIRE TO BECOME LEADER OF THE ARABS. IN SIMILAR VEIN, AKHBAR WRITER MOHAMED ABDUL LATIF DESCRIBES QADHAAFI AS A DON QUIXOTE MOUNTING WHITE HORSE TO TILT WITH WINDMILLS AND SCATHINGLY COMPARES HIS ACTIVITIES TO THOSE OF THE DUCE OF 40 YEARS AGO WHO ALSO POSED AS DEFENDER OF ISLAM. LIKE THE DUCE, QADHAAFI IS BECOMING THE LAUGHING STOCK OF WORLD. WRITING IN AKHBAR, MUSA SABRI CLAIMS THERE IS WIDESPREAD LIBYAN RESENTMENT OF QADHAAFI AS EVIDENCED BY AMINA OMAR AL MOUKHTAR THROWING MEDAL GIVEN HER BY QADHAAFI BACK INTO LATTER'S FACE BECAUSE OF DISAPPROVAL OF HIS POLICIES, BENGAZI UNIVERSITY STUDENT PLACARDS ATTACKING HIM, AND GRAFFITI APPEARING IN DERN A AGAINST HIM.

4. BOTH MUSAWAR AND AHRAH REMIND EGYTPANS THAT BRITS AND ITALIANS CONNIVED IN TWENTIES TO TURN OVER "EGYPTIAN OASIS OF GIARABUB" TO LIBYA. ALTHOUGH TRANSFER RATIFIED IN EARLY THIRTIES DURING SIDQI CABINET, EGYPTIAN PUBLIC OPINION NEVER APPROVED OF THIS ENFORCED TRANSFER OF EGYTPIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERRITORY.

5. COMMENT: THOUGH PARTLY TRADITIONAL FORM OF EGYPTIAN CATHARSIS WHEN DISPLEASED WITH SOMETHING, EGYPTIANS DOUBTLESS ALSO HOPE RECENT RASH OF PRESS ATTACKS MAY HAVE EFFECT OF FOMENTING DISSIDENCE AMONG LIBYANS AGAINST QADHAAFI AND AT A MINIMUM "EXPOSING" HIM BEFORE ARAB WORLD. THEY ARE CLEARLY

PART OF CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED GOE CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT AND, IF POSSIBLE, BRING DOWN QADHAAFI. REFERENCES TO GIARABUB OASIS ARE INTENDED AS A REMINDER TO QADHAAFI THAT GOE HAS TERRITORIAL CLAIM AGAINST LIBYA.

6. ATTACKS HAVE REACHED POINT WHERE CONFEDERAL PRIMMIN EL DHATEB AND CONFEDERAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER EL-RABTI HAVE APPARENTLY FELT NEED AGAIN TO OFFER THEIR GOOD OFFICES. EL-RABTI, AFTER BEING RECEIVED BY SADAT ON JUNE 25 AT SPEAKER'S REQUEST IS REPORTED TO HAVE FLOWN TO LIBYA TODAY IN AN EFFORT TO RENEW EARLIER CONFEDERAL MEDIATION EFFORT. HIS EFFORTS ARE LIKELY TO BE ABORTIVE. WHILE POSSIBILITY CANNOT BE EXCLUDED THAT HE MAY OBTAIN MUTUAL AGREEMENT TO HALT PRESS ATTACKS ON BOTH SIDES, WE DOUBT THAT ANY SUCH PRESS MORATORIUM WILL LAST FOR LONG. FOR NOW AT LEAST, GOE -- AND ESPECIALLY SADAT -- HAS COME TO REGARD QADHAAFI AS IMPLACABLE ENEMBY WHOSE CONTINUED PRESENCE IN OFFICE IS UNDESIRABLE.
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